

Public Consultation on the Draft Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Themes for Pharmaceutical Assistants

DRAFT

Who are pharmaceutical assistants?

Pharmaceutical assistants may work in conjunction with a pharmacist in the sale and supply of medicines, or carry out the activities of a pharmacist during their temporary absence from the pharmacy. Pharmaceutical assistants must be registered with the PSI in order to practise in Ireland.

What are the CPD themes and how will they be used?

The CPD themes, developed in consultation with the Pharmaceutical Assistants Association (PAA), were designed to take account of a pharmaceutical assistants practice, and the required knowledge, skill, competencies, and behaviours required in their role. For example, pharmacy care and professionalism. The themes are provided to assist pharmaceutical assistants when self-reflecting on their practice and to identify their continuing professional development needs.

When reflecting on their practice, and assessing what their CPD needs are, pharmaceutical assistants will review each of the themes and identify areas that they think will be beneficial for them to develop, either based on their current practice, and/or areas that will be beneficial to their future practice.

The themes may also be used as part of future annual CPD requirements. For example, the requirements in a given year may require pharmaceutical assistants to submit ePortfolio cycle(s) which demonstrates CPD activities that they have undertaken under one or more of the themes.

How are the CPD themes structured?

The title of each CPD theme is broad to encompass and reflect the wide range of knowledge, skill, competencies, and behaviours required for the role of pharmaceutical assistants.

Within each theme, a description is provided, along with examples of the types of knowledge, skill, competencies and behaviours that reflect that theme, and to guide pharmaceutical assistants when self-reflecting on their practice. The examples are included as a guide only. While pharmaceutical assistants can use them to self-reflect on their practice, the flexibility of the model allows them to include other examples that they may deem more suitable to their practice and which fall under the theme more generally.

CPD Themes

Seven CPD themes are proposed below. These are professionalism, organisational & management skills, collaboration, public health, pharmacy care, learning & development, and communication. A description of each theme is provided in Table 1.

One theme is called 'learning and development'. The purpose of this theme is to capture any learning and development relevant to a pharmaceutical assistants role and also any learning that they have undertaken which they feel is relevant and beneficial to their practice, to improving patient safety, that is not reflected in the seven themes provided. It will allow pharmaceutical assistants the flexibility to respond efficiently and effectively to their own CPD requirements, when required, whether in response to changes that might occur in their practice, and also to areas that they deem would be beneficial to develop further.



Table 1: Description of CPD themes

<p>Professionalism</p>	<p>Professionalism relates to the practice and conduct of a pharmaceutical assistant. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Acting with honesty, probity and integrity. ➤ Practising ethically, and legally. ➤ Keeping up-to-date and being knowledgeable on relevant legislation and medicines. ➤ Applying your knowledge and skills to ensure the patient is treated respectfully and receives safe and effective care. ➤ Raising and/or addressing unprofessional or unethical behaviour appropriately. ➤ Ensuring confidentiality and privacy, where appropriate. ➤ Respecting and being mindful of different cultural and social backgrounds. ➤ Identifying when its necessary to seek further information and advice from colleagues etc. to support decision making and practice to ensure patient safety.
<p>Communication</p>	<p>Communication refers to the interaction a pharmaceutical assistant may have with colleagues, patients, members of the public, and health care professionals to ensure appropriate, safe and beneficial outcomes. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Communicating and consulting effectively by actively listening and using effective verbal and non-verbal communication. ➤ Using language that is appropriate and understandable and checking for understanding. ➤ Respecting differing and alternative views on health care. ➤ Showing empathy, respect when communicating with others and being mindful of equality, diversity and inclusion. ➤ Communicating effectively through written communication. ➤ Communicating effectively and keeping up-to-date with virtual communication. ➤ Communicating and reporting clearly and openly with patients, colleagues and other health professionals in relation to errors.
<p>Collaboration</p>	<p>Collaboration refers to working with others, internal and external to the pharmacy setting, to ensure a desired and safe outcome for patients and members of the public. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Working collaboratively and effectively with colleagues, in the workplace or within a multi-disciplinary team and acknowledging and respecting their knowledge and expertise.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Working collaboratively and effectively with other health professionals and stakeholders, including patients, members of the public, medicines suppliers and others. ➤ Building positive relationships with colleagues, other health professionals, patients and members of the public. ➤ Assisting colleagues, other health care professionals, patients, and members of the public appropriately, and acknowledging and reflecting on feedback that might be received.
Public Health	<p>Public health refers to the role of a pharmaceutical assistant in the promotion of public health. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Informing and promoting health initiatives, health policies and guidelines to patients and members of the public. ➤ Keeping-up-to-date on public health resources and informing patients and members of the public on these. ➤ Participating in initiatives in response to national emergencies.
Pharmacy Care	<p>Pharmacy Care refers to the role of a pharmaceutical assistant in supplying and dispensing medicines safely to patients and the public. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensuring that medicines are appropriately sourced and stored in the pharmacy. ➤ That medicines are safely supplied to patients and the public, including that patients receive the necessary consideration and advice on medicines therapy. ➤ Appropriate and legislative records are maintained in respect of medicines supplied. ➤ Keeping knowledge on medicines, medicines guidelines, and medicines legislation, current and up-to-date.
Organisation and Management	<p>Organisation and Management skills refer to how a pharmaceutical assistant organises and manages their work, and the work of others, if applicable, to ensure the effective operation of your place of work. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Organising, managing and prioritising work, or managing others, to ensure work is completed effectively and efficiently. ➤ Understanding and implementing relevant policies and procedures. ➤ Identifying areas for improvement and committing to continuous quality improvement. ➤ Understanding risk as part of the role and taking measures to contribute to the mitigation of that risk.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Working collaboratively and effectively with colleagues. ➤ Contributing to audit activities for the purposes of improving services or developing new services.
Learning and Development	<p>Learning and development refers to the maintenance of the knowledge, skill, competencies and behaviours required for practice throughout a pharmaceutical assistant's career and the development of new ones that might be required as changes to a role and practice arise.</p> <p>It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Self-reflecting regularly on practice to identify any learning and development needs. ➤ Engaging in lifelong learning to maintain knowledge, skill, competencies and behaviours, and to develop new ones. ➤ Keeping up-to-date on the knowledge and skills required for the role. ➤ Understanding and keeping-up-to-date with health service reimbursement schemes. ➤ Keeping-up-to-date with advancements in technology and innovation. ➤ Actively and meaningfully engaging with the CPD model for pharmaceutical assistants. ➤ Sharing and briefing colleagues on new knowledge and skill that you obtain. ➤ Promoting the benefits of CPD to colleagues and peers.